WHAT I SAW IN MY GARDEN

OLIVER STONE DEAN

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AN INTERPRETATION

BY
OLIVER STONE DEAN

PREFACE BY S. PARKES CADMAN

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FOREWORD

ANY book offered to the public today should come with its own justification.

The papers herewith presented are not arid abstractions nor any hints on horticulture as their title might at first sight suggest. They are ethical interpretations of some things which I have observed in nature's process.

It is hoped that many who have attained success in life may take pleasure in recognizing here the principles that have guided their lives and that the young may be lead by them in that path of the just which as a shining light shines more and more unto the perfect day.

I take this opportunity also to express my thanks to my friend the Rev. S. Parkes Cadman, D.D., for the graceful and appropriate Preface with which he has introduced these papers.

OLIVER STONE DEAN.

PREFACE

SIR FRANCIS BACON, the shrewdest philosopher of his age, loved and wrote upon the garden, and the pleasures to be derived from its care and observation. Sir William Temple, one of the best equipped of seventeenth century diplomatists, retired from the crowded scenes of his successful statesmanship to the quiet and restful contemplation afforded him by his cherished garden. It is not without significance that the biblical story of man's halcyon state is environed by a paradise of blossoming flowers and healing plants. Our beloved and venerable friend, Dr. Dean, has long and deeply felt the charms of a similar retreat. After an honored active ministry in the Church of God, he brings forth fruit in his season, and presents it in this modest yet alluring volume. The lessons to be learned from an intimacy with the Creator's works are before us in the following chapters and should be treasured by the hearts and minds of their readers. The stamp of fidelity to reality and goodness is upon this book. It ascends through nature to the great Over-Soul, whose

beauty and benevolence are reflected in the fields which he has blessed, and in the pleasaunces where meditative spirits still hear his voice as it was heard by holy men and women in the former times. Man, as the crown of creation, his hereditary succession, his moral possibilities, and his religious needs, are here discussed in gentle and sagacious ways. I heartily congratulate Dr. Dean upon the tender associations which he has chosen and enriched by his contribution. He walks in a garden peculiarly his own. He knows that Gethsemane is the rose garden of God. He thinks of the empty tomb within another garden which has made the world to rejoice in the hope of immortality. He sojourns with an innumerable and a gracious company whose fellowship is sweet and profitable. I wish his book what it deserves: a wide and edifying recognition. May we who peruse its pages cull from it a nosegay redolent of truth and affection! May its author continue to have a long and mellow eventide ere the darkness falls on the garden where he has found a retreat for us all.

S. PARKES CADMAN.

Advent, 1923

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CHAPTER I

Its Narrow Boundaries

Life's Limitations

THAT keen observer and art critic John Ruskin wrote a book entitled "The Stones of Venice." Along with his critical observations on architecture he found some helpful and practical suggestions on politics, religion and political economy which gave to his book a large part of its value. Shakespeare speaks of those whose sagacity enables them to find "books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything." I am afraid I am neither poet nor naturalist nor geologist enough to make important discoveries in those fields, though I am enough of an optimist to look for good in everything.

This is the springtime when nature is waking from her wintry sleep, when the birds are coming back, the crocuses starting and the gardener is beginning to think of fertilizers and seeds. So, I have thought the present might be an opportune

moment to share with others some of the things which I have seen in my garden.

The first thing which impresses me is its narrow boundaries. It covers so narrow a space that it hardly seems worth while, but, if you stop to think, that fact gives it some advantages. Almost everybody can have a small garden when he could not have a large garden or a farm. Then you can cultivate intensively a small piece of ground when you have neither time nor strength to do more.

Start, then, right here. Everybody has his field of service, large or small. Many complain of the limitations of their lives. The farmer in his field, the merchant behind his counter, the teacher in the schoolroom, the mother with her children in the home often wish for wider fields and forget that the size of the field is of far less consequence than the way in which it is cultivated.

"Act well your part. There all the honor lies."

Many go hunting larger places for which oftentimes they are unfit instead of doing their best where they are. James Gailey was vice-president of the United States Steel Corporation and I once heard him tell a class of young engineers:

"If you don't do your work you will get fired; if you do only what you have to do you will hold

your place, but you will get nowhere; but if you are intent on doing all you can without your eyes on the clock you will get the next opening and you need not fear that the boss will not see you."

He who uses well what he has gets more. Sometimes the harvest from a narrow field is richer than that from a larger one. Perhaps your small garden is the home where you have to get the meals, work and dress the children and care for the house. That was the case with Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, but between times, while her children played on the floor of her cottage, she wrote that immortal story of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" — a fiery epic which melted off the chains of the slave.

Sometimes, indeed, one's usefulness is increased by narrowing his field. If John Bunyan had not been shut up twelve years in Bedford Jail "The Pilgrim's Progress" would never have been written. The Waverly Novels would never have been written if Sir Walter Scott had not lost his fortune, nor, except for the same reason the wonderful autobiography of General Grant. It is not the worst thing that can happen to some men to meet misfortune. It narrows the garden but the crop is good.

So if your garden is narrow stick your spade down in every corner of it. If your field of oppor-

tunity is small cover it with the best culture of which you are capable. It lends dignity to your small garden to recall the fact that though the surface is a dot on the landscape it extends 4,000 miles down and opens upward into regions beyond the stars. If you cultivate your little garden well you cannot tell what coming generations may fatten on its fruits.

So, " Brighten the corner where you are."

CHAPTER II

The Preparation of the Soil

Getting Ready for Service

THOSE of you who have been privileged to look in on one of the great Flower Shows held yearly in the Grand Central Palace in New York will have had your attention variously directed in that wilderness of beauty and bloom. You will have admired the roses that in fragrance and variety of sizes and shades of coloring rival those from the gardens of Hesperus, the banks of mammoth ferns of which the highlands of Scotland can show no equal, the tulips, carnations and azaleas and the big orange trees with their golden fruit which make you think of Florida. Yet probably not one person in ten, amid this riot of form and fragrance and colors, has given a thought to that rich damp mould out of which it all sprang, though that is the very basis on which the sun and rain and man work to create these marvels of beauty.

Not unlike this is the way that we generally look on those persons who have attained eminence in

any career. We are more likely to be taken up in admiration of what they are than in analyzing the soil in which they grew — taking account of their heredity, education, moral surroundings, and diligence which account for their success and are matters of first importance in life, whether applied to the garden or school or training camp. There is an old Latin maxim, " Ex nihilo nihil fit," out of nothing can nothing come or develop. You can only take out of a thing so much as you put into it, and the proverb applies equally to a sand bank or an empty barrel or an empty head. The crop or the outcome follows the law not only of what he soweth that shall he also reap but also that he shall reap in proportion to the preparation of the soil for the seed.

The time for that preparation for the garden is the springtime — and the time for the training of mind and development of character is the springtime of life. It is the early getting ready for the opportunity that has not yet arrived and for which there will be no chance to prepare when it suddenly does. I have known sad cases of failure to be ready when the offer came. A good farmer used to say that making the soil rich and mellow before planting saved half of the work of cultivation, so in a sense the best time to hoe corn was before it was planted — so the time to be ready for your

chance in life is before it comes. The baseball catcher gets on his padded gloves before the ball comes to him. Failure right here is the cause of frequent unavailing regret. Two friends of mine whose early opportunities were limited went into business and having made a fortune, had some political ambition. One became a member of the governor's council and the other a state senator, but they never ceased to regret that their limited education barred the way to higher places for them. The senior United States Senator from their state, Senator Lodge, has for the foundation of his eminence as a statesman the best culture of Harvard University.

It is a satisfaction to admit that some have attained eminence against the handicap of a limited preparation. They have done their best with what they had. Washington learned surveying in the wilds of Virginia, Lincoln pored over Euclid by the light of a pine-knot fire in a Kentucky cabin and fashioned his English style on the models of the Bible and Shakespeare. You could mention Franklin, the statesman and philosopher, Arkwright, the inventor of the spinning-jenny, Greeley, the editor, and Peter Cooper, the philanthropist. But Arkwright felt his deficiency so much that after he was fifty years old and had made a great fortune he gave two hours a day to

study, and Peter Cooper built the Cooper Institute where thousands and thousands of young men and women have had their training. It is a pity that in this day when the means of culture are so many and so free they should not be better used, that so many run cross lots to a business or profession instead of taking the surer road of thorough preparation.

Thus we have quacks instead of competent physicians, pettifoggers instead of learned jurists, pothouse politicians instead of broad-minded statesmen, and teachers who have a smattering of normal methods but are lacking in the substance of something to teach to a degree sometimes mortifying. This superficiality reveals itself in a way of which the persons themselves are not aware. When General Taylor was President, in one of his messages he congratulated Congress and the nation that we were at peace with all the world and the rest of mankind. He thought it sounded well and was only saved from his blunder after some trouble in the State Department. No preparation can be superfluous either in the garden or the gymnasium. Franklin's maxim is crystallized wisdom, " Plough deep while sluggards sleep and you shall have corn both to sell and to keep."

CHAPTER III

The Seed and the Sower

Heredity and Home Life

AS I have looked out on some of the rows in my garden after they have been some time planted and have seen no sign of life I am reminded of Bob Sawyer's chest of drawers, one half of which would not open and the other half had nothing in it. Something has gone wrong in the seed or the soil or the planting. The seed may have lacked vitality, or the soil may have been sour or soaked, or the planting may have been too deep.

Seed must have vitality or it will not grow, or if it has only a feeble life its growth will not be vigorous—as I have seen side by side in the same soil one plant feeble and another strong.

The seed, however, must get its vitality from the stock which grew it. The law of heredity runs through the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms and wonderful results have been achieved by its application. The big, slow, heavy Norman horse and the slim champion of the race-course belong to the same family; the thorn apple and the

pippin will grow on the same stock. Luther Burbank, that wizard of the plain, has developed a valuable thornless cactus. The wild cattle of the prairie and the Holstein and Jersey are only different breeds of the same species. Similarly the native characteristics in the human species appear. A father of a family and a shrewd observer of life once said to me:

" If a man wants to raise a fine family he must seek a fine wife." The seed gets its vitality from the stock, and biographies of remarkable men and women prove it. We are told that Sir Walter Scott's mother was a superior woman, well educated and a great lover of poetry. Byron's mother was proud, ill-tempered and violent and her unhappy son was like her. Napoleon's mother was noted for her energy and wrapped her infant son in blankets embroidered with the martial heroes of the Iliad. Lord Bacon's mother was a woman of strong mind. Nero's mother was a murderess. Patrick Henry's mother was a remarkable conversationalist and John Wesley's mother from her fine piety, intelligence and executive ability has been called the mother of Methodism.

The characteristics of these men came from their heredity, and because the same qualities persist and come down the family line some one has said a child's training should begin a hundred years

before he is born. Like a mountain spring which starts far back in the hills, family characteristics often come down a long line to full development. It is the right of every child to be well born and no parent may justly rob him of his birthright.

A new problem presents itself when it comes to the planting of the seeds of education and culture. So much depends on the constitution of the child, and parents or teachers are so often ignorant that, like the untaught gardener, they are often at their wits' end. One speaks harshly, like the man who puts his seed so deep that it cannot grow, or so softly that it lacks meaning and force, like the man who throws his seed on the surface with no covering. Not infrequently he makes threats that are not fulfilled and so teaches his child to lie. Sometimes one parent opposes the other as if one should dig up the seed which the other has sown and with most disastrous effects.

Harmony of family life is the indispensable condition of home culture, and the wise training of a child is one of the most important functions of a parent. The child's future is wrapped up in this seed bed. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it." Solomon did not say he would not depart from it before he became old — but it is an encouragement to some discouraged parents to be able

to point to some splendid results of early training in a genuine if late return to moral sanity.

I recall the case of a man in college with me, the son of a doctor of divinity, so dissolute that he was only retained in college because his father was a trustee. I have seen this man intoxicated on the campus. Later he became a doctor of divinity and an editor of an important religious paper.

I recall two others who became eminent ministers — and three more who became elders or devoted Sunday-school superintendents. Years ago an old man of eighty years of age in Middleboro, Mass., became a Christian under impressions of a sermon which he heard sixty years before in his English home. It seemed like a seed from the shroud of a mummy 4,000 years old come to life in the soil and sun.

In one of Munchausen's tales he tells of a bugler who went out on one very cold day and thought he had played a tune but heard no sound in the crisp air. Returning he hung up his bugle by the warm kitchen fire when presently he heard the soft music filling all the house. The frozen music thawed out.

Let parents and teachers take heart with the faith that "he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him."

CHAPTER IV

The Worm at the Root

Destructive Forces

AS I have sometimes walked through my garden in the morning when the sun was climbing the sky and the dewdrops hung like liquid pearls on the foliage, I have frequently seen some of the finest, thriftiest, most promising plants lying over on the ground entirely eaten off at the root. Digging down in the soil, the cause has become apparent as I have found a large brown grub of the color of the soil in which he burrows or a smaller little striped wire worm who has done the damage. In them I have found the authors of all the mischief and the subject of this paper.

Every gardener or farmer or fruit grower has to reckon with many and persistent foes. Look at that orchard yonder through which the army worm has made his way. Before him is the freshness of Eden and behind him the desolation of a devouring fire. Look at that potato field alive with unsightly and disgusting slugs, stripped of its foliage

and presenting only a lot of skeleton stalks. See those little striped, winged bugs that settle on your cucumbers, whose touch is like poison and who consume them in a few hours. Then there is the destructive currant worm, the vile green cabbage worm that leaves its slimy trail, that great green elephantine worm that feeds on your tomatoes and asparagus and the borers that destroy your squashes. Every growing thing seems to have its foe. That is just the way it is with human life. There is no one who passes through this world unscathed. Just as no plant can be set in such an out-of-the-way place that the worm cannot find it, so there is no seclusion in this world where evil will not find its victim. The worm of temptation is in every soil. It is in the home, in the school, in society, in business, everywhere. There is envy that leads to slander, covetousness that ripens into fraud, and dishonesty, anger and jealousy whose fruit is violence and sometimes murder, of which there is evidence in every day's record. Then there is the worm of appetite which leads to drunkenness and the use of poisonous drugs which have cut off or blasted many noble lives.

I have known some brilliant fellows succumb to strong drink. I have known others to scotch the deadly worm before he had completed his destructive work. John B. Gough, the great

temperance reformer, was a man of a highly organized and sensitive nature and early fell a victim to drink, but under the influence of his faithful wife he recovered his foothold on the path of sobriety, and carried the white flag of the temperance army in two hemispheres. It is on record that at one time in his military career General Grant indulged in intoxicants to the danger point, so that splendid officer of his staff, General Rawlins, determined to speak the word of friendly warning and tender his resignation in case it was not heeded. Today all the world knows of his victory over the Confederate army but all the world is not aware of his victory over himself. After his career as President he went on a trip around the world, being entertained at banquets and courts where to decline to drink wine might have been thought an offense but he always left his glasses turned down. There are a multitude of cases to duplicate these. But how much better to have avoided the evil at first! Very recently in reading the autobiography of Edward Bok, for thirty years the brilliant editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, I was struck with the fact that when, as a young stenographer, he was reporting a President's meeting and wine glasses were set on his desk he had them removed. It is a wise thing to kill the worm at the beginning.

Today the excessive use of narcotics is complained of and the heavy importation of opium and morphine justifies the complaint. Here is another deadly worm of whose work I have seen sad effects. One of the most brilliant and at the same time saddest bits of English literature is De Quincey's *Confessions of an Opium Eater*. Its relieving feature is that he at last succeeded in breaking the deadly spell. In a century starred with the greater names of William Hazlitt, Charles Lamb, Thomas Carlyle, and De Quincey the name of Samuel Taylor Coleridge shone with surpassing splendor. He was poet, philosopher, critic and conversationalist around whose shrine a troupe of powerful young minds gathered. He has been likened to the desert-born steed with hoofs to outstrip the wind and eyes to outgleam the lightning but, under the enchanting draught of opium, smitten as with the withering simoon, thenceforward staggering with dimmed eye and tottering limbs along the desert sand. Prohibition did not come a minute too soon, nor is the sale of narcotics too strictly limited for the public welfare. The man who, under the plea of preserving personal liberty, is trying to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment is like a dog barking up the wrong tree — the squirrel is not there. He is safely lodged in that other tree of a firmly settled public purpose

to keep the soil clean from the worm of the still and from the poison poppy grub.

It is an instructive warning to old and young to recall the speed with which the worm and the forces of evil do their work. When the slugs begin their attack on your currants or potatoes it is only a question of hours. And it takes only a brief moment to blast the fairest reputation and ruin a life. Sometimes temptations descend upon the good as lightnings are shot down upon the strongest oak. He was a good man far on in life who said, " I tremble that though I have lived so long in the world with a fair character and a good reputation among men, yet it is possible in one short hour of temptation to do some single act that shall blast character and ruin the reputation of a lifetime."

" Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." So this homely meditation reaches its climax in the fact that worms and vices work in the dark. Light is a great revealer and a great foe to vice. When the streets of London were first lighted at night there was a great decrease in crime. All kind of carousers hold their orgies in the dark. " They that are drunken are drunken in the night." In the night the burglar breaks through the wall he had marked for himself in the daytime. In the night the seducer prosecutes his evil designs. Men love darkness just in pro-

portion as their deeds are evil. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." "How oft the means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done!"

"O opportunity, thy guilt is great,
Whoever does the sin thou pointest the season
And laugh'st at right, at law, at reason,
And waiting in the gate where none can spy him
Sits sin to seize the souls that wander by him."

Avoid evil and give opportunity no chance in your garden.

CHAPTER V

Weeds

Minor Faults

TENNYSON in his *Day Dream* asks:

" O to what uses shall we put
The wild-weed flower that simply blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose? "

To this Cowper answers:

" They whom truth and wisdom lead
Can gather honey from a weed."

A higher authority has written:

"I went by the field of the sluggard, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, the face thereof was covered with nettles, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I beheld and considered well; I saw, and received instruction." (*Prov.* 24 : 30–32.)

There is a moral shut within the bosom of the rose and written on the surface of a neglected garden.

You notice that the deadly worm and the all-devouring bug which absolutely kill the growing plant are not the garden's only foes. There are the weeds which, while they do not kill the plant,

choke and smother it so that it cannot grow and develop. So in the home and in business and in community life besides those great outstanding forces of evil which utterly kill are some minor evils which hinder the development of some of the finest qualities. They are not the deadly worms that wholly destroy the home, but the weeds that hinder its finest life.

Home is the most beautiful garden on earth. Carefully cultivated, it is like a quarter section of heaven. But while it is set with the flowers of love and tenderness and mutual service they are all planted in the soil of earth which is not wholly hospitable to them. Weeds and vices and irritating faults spring spontaneously and the wheat and the good fruit and the virtues demand careful cultivation.

The earth has been called mother to the weeds but only step-mother to its useful growths. I call it the total depravity of the soil, which, like total depravity of man, does not mean that he is as bad as he can be but that he has some good in him. Sometimes it is hard to find it but still not all the good is in the saints.

" The honey bee that wanders all day long
The field, the woodlands and the gardens o'er
To gather in his fragrant winter store
Humming in calm content his winter song
Seeks not alone the rose's glowing breast,

The lily's dainty cup, the violet's lips,
But from all rank and noxious weeds he sips
The single drop of sweetness closely pressed
Within the poison chalice."

Sometimes the good is hard to find and the quantity small — but it is there if we seek it as the bee seeks honey from the weed. It is a fine quest to be looking always for good in everybody. What kind it would be hard to tell. Linnæus may catalogue the plants of the earth but there is no moral botanist able to catalogue the things which in one way or another bring unhappiness to nearly all lives. They are many different kinds but selfishness is the soil with evil seeds in which they all grow.

It works out in the home by some one shirking his part — so that the one least able has to bear the burden, shovel the coal and bring in the ash cans. Its laconic philosophy is "Let George do it," or it never sees the half dozen good things that have been done but bears down hard on the one thing which has not been done, or there is some one in the household whose constant irritation and fretfulness spoil the calm and peace of the home.

In the community this evil weed takes the form of slanderous gossip or of the envy of a prosperous neighbor who has built a new house or bought a new automobile. In commercial life it leads

people to hold the war scale of prices as long as possible after the stress of war has passed. There is very little of the Golden Rule that governs the commercial world today. It is a garden grown well over with the weeds of selfishness.

A faulty temper makes a bad companion. It is said a young man once came to ask the hand of the daughter of Dr. Jonathan Edwards and that he advised the young man not to marry her because of a violent temper which would make him unhappy.

" Why," said the young man, " she is a Christian, isn't she? "

" We hope so," said the Doctor, " but the Lord can get along with people that you and I could not live with."

If we are really to get what our garden teaches it is well to note that there are some weeds which emit an unpleasant odor, and from what I hear and see there are some in the garden of our social life that are not altogether sweet. There seems to me too much tolerance in some directions of that which is not morally sweet. It runs through art and the stage and fiction and dress. I am not hypercritical but there is what the old Latins called " modus in rebus," a mean in things.

The great novels which carry elevated sentiments, instruction and entertainment are a bene-

diction to old and young, but those that are flavored with profanity and padded out with details of divorce proceedings are weeds of bad odor. Art and theaters and books are companions, and familiarity with their lower forms breeds contempt of virtue and modesty.

What to do with the small weeds of the garden and the minor faults of character lies on the surface of the problem. "Obste principiis," stop the beginning. A farmer friend of mine had his weeder running in his field and some one said:

"Why do you keep that up? There are no weeds there."

"No," was his reply, "and if you keep that running there never will be."

CHAPTER VI

The Weather

The Uncontrollable Forces

MATTHEW ARNOLD speaks of a "power not ourselves which makes for righteousness" and in view of the uncertainties of the weather I am disposed to adapt the phrase to agriculture and speak of the power not ourselves that makes for a harvest.

Years ago Henry Drummond wrote a great book entitled "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Much more distinctly do I see a spiritual law in the natural world. Contemplating the vast expanse and splendor of the starry heavens some one has written, "The undevout astronomer is mad." How much more is he beside himself who can read at close range the pages of nature written on forest and field and miss the lesson that Paul gave to the Athenians when he made their fruitful seasons bear witness to the true God and when he told those corrupt Romans that the things that were made so clearly revealed their Maker as to leave them without excuse.

" There's not a tint that paints the rose
Nor decks the lily fair
Nor streaks the humblest flower that blows
But God has placed it there.

" There's not a place in earth's vast round
Of ocean, earth or air,
Where skill and wisdom are not found,
For God is everywhere."

It is worth while to note the wide play of the weather in the operations of the world.

We hear about the reign of law and the uniformity of nature. If you throw up a stone it will always return unless hindered. Water will always run down hill unless its course is obstructed. Open the blinds and the light will flood the darkened room. The fine wire of the radio will always pick up the electric waves. Gravitation, light, electricity and all the forces of nature follow their uniform laws.

When, however, it comes to their operations they are anything but uniform. Otherwise we should have the same weather at the same date every year. We should never have to guess what the weather will be tomorrow. We should be apprised of every clear day and warned of every storm. On the contrary, the freaks of the weather are proverbial. On the eleventh of March, 1888, we had a blizzard that was memorable in the records of the nineteenth century, but we have

had no other such storm since. The freaks of the weather many times give force to the Scotch proverb, "The best laid plans o' mice and men gang aft agley." Today your garden flourishes and is full of promise; tomorrow a storm of wind and hail has cut it down and beaten it into the ground. A heavy rain retards the march of Blücher to the field of Waterloo, the French are defeated, Napoleon is a fugitive, a captive, and an exile. Tonight the great Armada of Spain hovers down along the coast of England, confident of victory tomorrow; a storm at night has swept those ships all away and only the roar of the surf and the cry of the wild sea bird disturbs the air. Ten years ago the new White Star steamer *Titanic*, then queen of the seas, started out on her maiden trip to make a record; in the fog and darkness she ripped open her sides on a huge iceberg and sank with nearly all her passengers to the bottom of the sea. Today soft tropical airs are kissing the roses of St. Thomas, tomorrow stupendous forces blow off the top of Mt. Pelee with terrible destruction.

The weather gives no account of its coming or going and pays no regard to the plans of men, and I can glean nothing from the fruits and flowers of my garden more impressive than a supernal vision of that divine sovereignty which rolls the stars along and superintends all human affairs

for the welfare of mankind. No man embarks on any enterprise but he must take account of the contingencies of the weather. The bad man as truly as a saint must live by faith. No gardener commits a seed to the soil, no mariner turns the prow of his ship to the sea but both the seed and the ship are put in charge of forces over which man has no control. Life and death are the football of the storm. Years ago an intimate friend of mine, a young banker in a western town, drove to a neighboring town on business and as he was hitching his horse a sudden cyclone hurled a plank through the air which struck and killed him. The weather can grow or destroy a crop, can caress an invalid or kill a strong man.

What, then, is the folly of the man who, like so many, talks loudly about being independent! No man ever was or ever can be independent of his environment or of his fellow men. You cannot make a spear of grass or a head of wheat grow. These are things which neither power nor wealth can obtain. Can gold gain friendship? Is there any greater impudence of hope? Will power command sympathy or give back a blind man his sight? You cannot add a minute to your life, you cannot even die if you are tired of life and want to unless you commit suicide.

So there is nothing left for you to do but to rely

on the operations of a benevolent Providence and follow the inspired law of both life and husbandry: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

CHAPTER VII

The Persistence of Nature

Making the Best of Everything

ALL life is subject to extremes of experience. I have sometimes gone out in my garden after a heavy shower and found the small hollows filled with puddles of water and the earth badly washed from the roots of some of the plants so that they looked as if they had been badly treated and would have a hard time to recover. After a little while, however, the water has settled away and with a little skillful assistance of the hoe they have righted up and soon have seemed to be growing all the thriftier for the plentiful moisture left at the roots.

At another time I have gone out at midday when the burning sun was pouring down a shower of hot rays and the vines lay wilted and panting in sorry resignation as though they were ready to die. By and by the sun goes behind the western hills, the heat abates, the cool air of evening condenses the pearly dews and they rise in the morning as one who has never had any trials rises from his bed.

But the storm and the sun hit every garden and trying experiences come to every life. It is a beautiful lesson by which the plants and the flowers teach us how to meet them. The sources of our trials are manifold. Sometimes they come from the ebullitions of a hot temper, like a storm cloud charged with lightning, and when they are met in a similar spirit it is as when two thunder storms meet. Sometimes our expectations are disappointed and the disappointment is hard to bear. Sometimes our wishes are not gratified or our wills are crossed.

Then, nearly all of us are subject to moods which must be consulted in us and which we must consult in others. Some have a fiery temper with which they find it hard to contend or an unruly tongue that gives them trouble either to speak kind words or to tell the truth. They are like a man whom I knew in our county who was so given to exaggerations that they took on the quality of falsehood and the church to which he belonged called him to account for it. At the end of the conference he made this confession:

" I know, brethren, I do exaggerate and I am sorry and I have shed barrels and barrels of tears over it."

The things we have to contend with in ourselves as well as in others make life a continual discipline. Everything depends on the way in which we meet

the disagreeable things of life. Some people have the way of always meeting them in a manner to make a bad matter worse. They do not learn the lesson of the willow which bends before the wind, but to their own discomfort rise up in resistance. Self-control under trials and provocations is a great triumph, for "he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city," and that self-control is a good preparation for doing the next thing.

We are told that a short time ago a man had reached the age of fifty-nine in poverty but then he struck out courageously and soon made a fortune. On the other hand, every now and then we read of one who has committed suicide because he has lost his money or his health. That is the difference between a hero and a coward. Abruzzi, the great natural philosopher of Geneva, had taken observations of the weather for twenty-seven years and wrapped the record around the thermometer. A new maid cleaned up the study one day and burned what she called the dirty papers and put clean ones on in their place. When he came and saw what was done he halted for a moment, then folded his arms and simply said:

"You have lost twenty-seven years of my life. Hereafter touch nothing in this room."

It is a good habit to make light of trying experi-

ences. Sidney Smith was an invalid but even in his old age his cheerful spirits never failed him, and one day he wrote a friend, " I have gout and asthma and several other diseases but otherwise I am very well." To Lady Carlisle he wrote, " If you hear of sixteen or eighteen pounds of flesh wanting an owner they belong to me. I look as if a curate had been taken out of me."

How much better that is than to make all one's family and friends miserable because one does not feel well oneself! There are many fretful souls who need to be anointed with the oil of gladness. You can never make the best of everything except as you give the best to everything. The dome of St. Paul's Cathedral in London is a great sounding gallery that gives you back the words and tones which you speak. So the world is a great echo chamber. By the law of its construction " a soft answer turneth away wrath; but a grievous word stirreth up anger." To be querulous and fault-finding gives the other party an excuse to be so too. Bearing down unreasonably begets recklessness and the man says, " I don't care if it did happen." Soft words spoken in soft tones are like oil on the water.

There is no finer moral in the bosom of the rose than that which enjoins us to be adorned with a

meek and quiet spirit and to make the best of every hard experience.

These beautiful visions of pleasure and profit are what I have seen in my garden. All persons are not endowed with the same equable temper nor do all enjoy the same lot in life but all may, if they will be adorned with jewels of character unmatched by any from the mines of Johannesburg or Golconda.

CHAPTER VIII

The Beneficence of Nature

Good Stewardship

AS I have watched the processes of nature as they have gone on in my garden and seen how generously there has been given back to me response to my supply of fertilizer and to my labor in cultivation, I have read the lesson of benevolence which should govern the conduct of all mankind. All life rests for its support on the generous bosom of the earth.

Only a brief time ago the papers were congratulating the country on the revival of its agriculture, because the prosperity of all other industries depended upon the prosperity of this basal industry. And it is basal because it is constantly giving of its productions for the support of life. The law of constant and liberal giving is a truly spiritual law in the natural world and I was never more impressed with its imperious nature than by the consideration of nature's own example. Incidentally, it enlarges the scope of our vision and furnishes a needed admonition to those many lazy or stingy

souls who never have anything to give, to look over the garden fence and take note of nature's diligence to increase her resources that she may give. It is not alone the garden and the cultivated fields that pour forth their abundance of corn and wheat and succulent products but there is not a barren or out-of-the-way place in all the world that does not make an effort to offer its contribution to the welfare of man or beast. Flowers and coarse grasses adorn her wild lands, cowslips and ferns cover her marshes. From the ooze in the bottom of her ponds she sends up her white pond-lilies to shed fragrance on the air and she even clothes her barren rocks with beautiful mosses and lichens. Her mines are her treasure house of gold and silver and precious stones, of iron and of coal, her forests are at once a picture gallery of beautiful foliage and an exhaustless lumber yard of valuable timber. Her blessings are of the deep as well, for she fills the oceans with such abounding life that it is said that an acre of water is more productive of food for man than an acre of soil. All this she offers as a benefaction for the welfare of man and at the same time as an example for his industry in getting and his constant liberality in giving. It rebukes the indolence which sets us the claim of poverty and the selfishness which

denies the responsibility of stewardship and which says, " What is mine is my own and the world has no claim on me."

Take notice that nature is not made poor by her gifts. The trees that were cut off when I was young have been replaced by new forests today. If you want more roses cut them when they are in bloom so that more may come and more will come. If you want to check their abundance leave the old buds on.

Remember that " there is that scattereth, and increaseth yet more; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth only to want," and this is universal and an unrepealed law of moral action. Last fall the leaves and flowers fell and the trees were bare but they supplied a needed humus to the soil, and see the regal robes in which they clothe themselves today. There is no law that calls for giving to the limit of poverty. Year by year I have supplied my garden with fertilizer and year by year it has given back to me generously, but not all its strength, and today the soil is so fat with its accumulated reserve that it might almost be said that it is good enough to be eaten. I have seen the fortunes of liberal givers furnish an illustration of the law. Now for nature write God and I will add that this law of nature is also the law of God.

A few years before he died, Dr. W. H. Hayes, who for most of his life was editor of *The Independent*, wrote a number of interesting articles on his general view of things, in one of which I remember he maintained that as every personality must have some body for its expression so the whole universal nature or cosmos was the body of God. Now, whether he was right or not, yet in wisdom and power and vastness, and the operation of providential laws, it might very well pass for that, since the universal experience of mankind with the operation of the laws of nature are exactly in harmony with what are revealed as laws of God.

So I emphasize the moral law of the beneficence of nature as written in the soil and on the whole face of the visible world, as an order of God carrying with it the promise of prosperity to those who obey it, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom." So I close this chapter by quoting the brief charity sermon of the eccentric Sidney Smith, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord. If you believe in the security, down with the dust."

CHAPTER IX

The Ideal Nation

Patriotism

THIS chapter is written on the eve of the one-hundred and forty-sixth anniversary of our nation's independence of our mother country.

The waving of banners, the glare of rockets and the booming of cannon will not signify much to many of our youth nor to many of the newcomers to our land but a holiday and general good time. Our progress and general prosperity have been unexampled in the history of the world, but in the last few years we have been summoned to an extraordinary test of character and courage. We shared in the rescue of the imperiled nations of Europe but the reaction on our own people has not been wholly salutary. War, which always opens the floodgates of hell, has left behind as an aftermath a recklessness of human life, an orgy of prodigal spending and criminality of many kinds.

The present seems, therefore, to be an opportune time to take account of stock in our national

heritage of liberty and lay upon all patriots an increased sense of responsibility for its preservation and enlargement. Our citizens can do no better on this national anniversary than to review some characteristics of the ideal nation.

I do not here discuss the merits of the different forms of government, as monarchy like that of Germany as she was, or limited like England, or an oligarchy such as Russia is today, or a republic like the United States, to which, of course, we are all partial; but forms of government are not essential to true liberty if the spirit of liberty animates the rulers and fitness for freedom characterizes the subjects.

(1) So the first characteristic of the Ideal State which I name, is that it is religious. "Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah." If the limits of this book permitted, it would be perfectly easy to show, from both reason and history, that national freedom has always been inseparable from national morality, and national morality inseparable from national theism or belief in the God of the Bible.

The polytheism of the ancient empires not only erected no barriers against the immoralities of those times but opened the door to the practice of the grossest vices and even invested them with the sacred sanctions of religion. The dis-

graceful orgies of the worship of Bacchus, the unclean rites practiced at the shrine of Venus, and even the practices of modern polygamy are all alike proof of how a system of religion where God is not may even be invoked as the minister of passion and crime, and where these prevail liberty is dead. When France gave up her religion and set up her tenth-day holidays in the place of the Sabbath, she set up a courtesan on the high altar of the cathedral of Notre Dame, crowned her goddess of Reason with flowers and royal robes. Then a hell of hate and anarchy broke loose and the streets of Paris ran red with the best blood of the empire. So do "men set up diviners when they cease to have prophets, they open the caves of sorcery when they shut up the temples of the living God."

(2) The Ideal State must not have too many unassimilated or revolutionary elements in it. David said, "Rescue me, and deliver me out of the hand of aliens, whose mouth speaketh deceit, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood." Poor David had a hard time of it. What with Saul's enmity, and Absalom's conspiracy, and Ahithophel's evil counsel, and Jeroboam's ambition, and the restlessness of the heathen tribes about him it would be hard to describe his lot. One of the problems of our national

life which today is at the front is how far we can stand the strain of foreign immigration and the prevalence of ideas out of harmony with our system of government. For many years we have depended on our territorial isolation and the elasticity of our representative government to stand the pressure of a vast amount of ignorance and bigotry and prejudice and depravity which has flowed in upon us in vast volume. Our free schools and churches have lent a conserving influence, our representative institutions have tended to conciliate prejudice and to disarm bigotry, so that for many years we deemed it safe to open our doors to all comers. Of late years, however, the great numbers and the changed character of the immigrants has made it expedient to put a strainer over the sluices of the incoming tide. A measure of ignorance is not a bar to good citizenship; we need honest workers but we have no use for those aliens whose mouths speak vain words of anarchy or despotism and who lend their right hand to falsehood and dishonesty in dealing. Perhaps it would be well also to get over the foolish notion of any manifest destiny in control of us apart from our own wise action, and to reflect that that may not be true which has been wittily said, that God will take care of children and fools and the United States.

(3) Another characteristic of the Ideal State is material prosperity and contentment. It would be an interesting study to search out in the Bible the many instances in which promises of temporal prosperity are made to national obedience and disaster threatened to disobedience. It would also be profitable to follow the record of fulfillment of that law in the history of nations — if prosperity can put a nation under bonds to obey the moral law and to serve humanity, we are that people. The property of this country in 1860 was set down at fifteen billions, of which the Civil War annihilated about half, but so rapid was our recovery that in 1885 it was sixty billions. Now so vast and increasing have been our resources that it is not possible to keep pace in our estimate with their phenomenal development. The treasures of mineral wealth stored up in the earth, the exhaustless quarries of marble and granite, the coal and iron and oil, the golden harvest of a thousand valleys and flocks and herds that clothe our pastures, the treasures of the sea as well as of the land, are such as beggar even the blessing of Joseph. Our garners are full, affording all manner of store. Our oxen are fat for the slaughter or strong for the yoke of labor.

And yet we are hardly the Ideal Nation. Our

floating palaces plough the seas with the speed of birds of passage; our airplanes outstrip the wind; we talk with our neighbors on the other side of the globe with the speed of lightning; and still we are not the Ideal Nation. We fill great libraries, carve peerless statues and endow great universities, and yet we are hardly the Ideal Nation.

Great wealth brings great perils. Greed grows with increase of gold. The more a man has the more he wants and generally the less he is disposed to make a wise use of his fortune. Often it tempts to an unlawful business, to gambling and dishonesty, and bootlegging. Knowledge and skill do not make character any more than gold does. What of an artist if he paints vile pictures? Or of an expert engraver if he is a counterfeiter? What if a man can travel a hundred miles an hour, if he is a scoundrel at his journey's end? What boots it that his words go on lightning wings around the world if they are only lies — political or commercial? The ideal citizen and the Ideal State will bow in letter and spirit equally to the Ten Commandments and to the Constitution of the State.

(4) A fourth characteristic of the Ideal Nation is that it will be blest with a numerous cultivated and virtuous generation of young people. When

the prophet pictures Jerusalem's prosperity it is of a city full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

When Goldsmith pictures the Deserted Village he sings:

> " Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

And our Longfellow sets up high-minded men as the real pillars of state.

Of course, we have not reached the national ideal. We have yet to say with an ancient worthy, " Not as though I had attained either, yet were already perfect." There are yet spots in our feasts of charity. The priest and the Levite have passed by the victim of violence on the other side of the road, and the good Samaritan has not yet bound up all his wounds. They were too many for even the Red Cross. The dust of Dive's chariot wheels still falls on the rags of Lazarus.

And yet look at our growing commonwealths, the beneficence of our laws, and the generous provision made for the training of the young. Think of the multitudes of young men and women who have gone out from our colleges and schools, trained in mind and heart to be centers of social, intellectual and spiritual power; ornaments of home and society; leaders in business, in church

and state. What promise do they afford that "our sons shall be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as the polished corner-stones of the temple!" Though we enjoy a continental isolation and hold untold wealth with a quarter of the gold of the world in our treasuries, we have not been wholly selfish. We have poured out wealth and blood without measure to save imperiled peoples and to rescue from anarchy and famine war-torn lands, to which the rich man has given his million and the poor man his mite. Ability has in some good measure spelled responsibility, but we cannot learn that lesson too well. Our schools and colleges and seminaries must be kept at white heat. This age of intense activity is also the age of golden opportunity. We are pioneers in the fields of republican government and religious freedom. We have been pushing the Mayflower out into uncharted seas. We have safely passed the stormy waters of emancipation, of woman suffrage, and of prohibition, but who knows whether we are yet to founder on some hidden rock of domestic or foreign policy?

"Let the lower lights be burning." Let every patriot do his best to retire to private life the man who plays politics to serve himself instead of serving his country. Let us purify the foun-

tains of our political and social life and let us enact wise laws, striving toward the ideal till we can sing with pride:

"O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life."

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